
The Story of the Zulus by J. Y. Gibson

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ment in preventing children who seem bright and capable from progressing mentally after they reach the age of puberty.

One of the best features of this book is the way in which it puts the life of the native side by side with the influences and changes which follow in the wake of the white man. Apparently the introduction of European rule has been extraordinarily peaceful. No fighting whatever has occurred and the people have submitted almost with pleasure. This is largely the result of their peaceable, placid character. No feature of the book is more noticeable than the frequency with which both authors speak of the peaceful quietness of life in northern Rhodesia. The climate is highly uniform, the means of subsistence can be obtained easily and there is nothing to stir men's minds to great activity. The chief excitements of the natives are petty local quarrels, largely about women. The handful of Europeans, partly officials and partly missionaries, with practically no traders, lead a life of extreme monotony, and yet seem to find a good deal of satisfaction in it. It appears as if the nature of the country had a soothing influence on the human mind. How far this will prevent progress remains to be seen, but it can scarcely fail to be an important factor.

ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON.

The Story of the Zulus. By J. Y. GIBSON, London, Longmans, 1911, Pp. 338.

What is called the "South African native question" presents one of the most difficult and perplexing problems in all Africa. Often by the application of military force the imposition upon South African natives of European authority carried with it the occupation of native lands, the execution or exile of native kings and chiefs, the slaughter of numerous native peoples, and engendered all the horrors and bitter hatreds of cruel war and invasion.

In the presence of the superior number of the natives one of the re-actions of the political conduct of Europeans in South Africa is that the local government and resident white population seem to be dominated by the psychological influence of a deep social and political fear, which prevents harmony and justice between the races and which consigns the natives to inequality in opportunity and to a fixed and constitutional status of civil and social inferiority.

The Story of the Zulus by Mr. J. Y. Gibson, is important not only because it throws considerable light upon South Africa's greatest social and political problem—the "native question"—but as well

because it tells in excellent literary form the repeated struggles and efforts of one of the bravest Negroid tribes in Africa to retain possession of its own land and country and to prevent its military and political subjugation by an alien race. It is a thrilling but exceedingly sad story.

The term Zulu evidently is derived, as the author says, from the name of the 3rd house of one of the Zulu tribes of which Tshaka was one of the later kings. Sir Harry H. Johnston states in his *Colonization of Africa* that the Abantu tribes came from the north of Africa "under three thousand years ago."

With eleven illustrations, 316 pages and an excellent index, *The Story of the Zulus* has twenty-six very interesting and short chapters. The continuity of the narrative and the brevity of its chapters make it read like some tale in romance or in fiction. The names of the chief actors in the story together with their statements, the dates of important military and political events, the scenes of battles and the territory of tribes, are given and described with such particularity, that there is little room to doubt the correctness and authenticity of what the author offers to his readers as facts. He ventures so seldom beyond the realm of an earnest narrator of occurrences, that his opinions carry the authority and weight which comes only from the most intimate contact with all the essential facts.

In the first chapter he describes the aboriginal customs of the Zulu peoples in the early days with a little stress upon their iron industry. It appears that the Zulus were formerly under a number of independent chiefs. In a few succeeding chapters he sets forth the growth and development of Zulu nationality under the leadership of Dingiswayo, a chief of one of the tribes. In a few more chapters he relates the efforts of Dingiswayo and his successors,—Zwidi, Tshaka, Dingana, Umpande and Cetshwayo,—to maintain their supremacy in tact, disclosing here and there the different plots and intrigues of jealous rivals for the throne.

No sooner than the Zulu tribes were welded together into a common national entity than a strange and new factor was introduced into their political life which ultimately changed their national destiny.

The Boers, weary of British authority as manifested from Cape Town, treked and pressed upon the Zulus for more and more land which they obtained. Under the fear of a general native uprising the British colonial government extended its jurisdiction to include the new Boer territory because the Boers had been checked in their

territorial expansion and defeated in battle by the bravery and courage of the Zulus in arms. The unsettled land dispute with the Boers was assumed by the British government to be followed by the invasion and subjection of Zululand together with the pathetic exile and imprisonment of its king, Cetshwayo in the Cape Town castle at the coast. In his lonely confinement it must have been some consolation to this royal prisoner to reflect that all along the Undunyeneni Hill his subjects were as loyal to him fleeing in defeat and disaster from British fury as were the Scot Highlanders to Prince Charles Stuart seeking refuge in Scottish hills.

But Cetshwayo was permitted to return to his country upon his consent and pledge to carry out a certain British domestic program. Zululand had been divided up into thirteen principalities with chiefs forced unwillingly upon the Zulu people with the addition of a British resident on the ground. The Zulu military organization was destroyed, the Zulu nation as a sovereign power lost in Zululand as a British colony, and the house of Zulu permanently denied participation in Zulu affairs, in the final exile, like Napoleon, of Dinuzulu, son of Cetshwayo, Undabuko and Tshingana, from their country to the cold and barren rocks of St. Helena.

All through the book are many ethnological and social facts concerning the mind, life and character of the Zulus which identify them in the main with the great masses of the African races.

The absence of an outline and headings for the chapters detracts somewhat from the book. *The Story of the Zulus* is not a penetration into African life as *Studies in West Africa* by Mary H. Kingsley; *Native Constitution* by Casely Hayford; *Fanti Customary Law* by John Sarbah; *Fetichism in West Africa* by Dr. Nassau; and three books of Sir A. B. Ellis on the Gold Coast tribes; but it is significant in that it gives the ground facts in a most difficult and complex situation of social interest to the whole world. It is a great and conservative survey of those forces which made the Zulu state, the motives which impelled and the means employed by the British Government to obliterate it. It is not altogether improperly called *The Story of the Zulus*; but to the reviewer its chief merit is and it deserves to be read and remembered more because of its bearing fundamentally upon the grave and trying problems which now confront the South African people, the peaceful and harmonious solution of which mean so much for the happiness and welfare of the white and black peoples of the globe.

GEORGE W. ELLIS.